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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/904,042	07/11/2001	K. Michael Han	M-7468 US	1940

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Theodore P. Lopez
SKJERVEN MORRILL MacPHERSON LLP
Suite 700
25 Metro Drive
San Jose, CA 95110-1349

[REDACTED] EXAMINER

WOJCIECHOWICZ, EDWARD JOSEPH

[REDACTED] ART UNIT [REDACTED] PAPER NUMBER

2815

DATE MAILED: 01/03/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

[Signature]

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/904,042	Applicant(s) Han
	Examiner Edward Wojciechowicz	Art Unit 2815



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

13) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

a) All b) Some* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

15) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 18) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____

16) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 19) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

17) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 2 20) Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The exact structure and process for forming the claimed invention is not clearly understood. In claims 1 and 10, what is the relative difference in the thickness of the insulating layer over each region?

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

- (e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371© of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

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4. Claims 1-7, and 10-12 are rejected, insofar as they are understood, under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gardner et al. The reference to Gardner shows a FET structure where the thickness of the gate insulating layer varies over different regions of the device, as claimed. Specifically, Gardner teaches using a thicker dielectric layer in critical regions of the device which are subjected to higher electric fields. See, for example, the Fig. 4 embodiment of Gardner, and the discussion at Col. 1, lines 25-47, and the discussion at Col. 3, lines 15-24. As can be seen from this discussion, Gardner not only teaches the use of thicker gate dielectric layers in certain places, but also recognizes the need to keep the electric field below about 6Mv/cm at the edges of the gate electrode.

Gardner also uses dielectric thicknesses which are within the same order as that claimed by applicant, and also makes use of the same materials claimed, such as polysilicon gate electrodes and silicon dioxide dielectric layers.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-12 are further rejected, insofar as understood, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gardner et al, and further in view of applicant's admitted prior art, as

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discussed in the specification. While Gardner teaches the inventive concept, and structure of the invention with the formation of a gate dielectric layer which is thicker in areas over certain regions, and thinner over other regions of the device, Gardner does not specifically refer to the use of an ONO dielectric stack, or a control electrode, as claimed in claims 8 and 9. However, as seen in the discussion of the prior art at page 1 of the instant specification, these features are well known in this art, and would be commonly found in device structures such as Gardner's, which is also applicable to FET memory devices.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to E. Wojciechowicz whose telephone number is (703) 308-4898, or to SPE Eddie Lee whose number is (703) 308- 1690.



EDWARD WOJCIECHOWICZ
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP 2500

EW:ew

December 31, 2001